# "How Dangerous Is The EU"

(2016)

Often described by critics as over-sized and unaccountable, the EU certainly divides opinion, but just how much power does it have. And how dangerous could it be?

In the 21st century, the United States of America is the most powerful country in the world, dominating the global economy and political agenda. But across the Atlantic Ocean a collection of unified countries poses an increasing threat to U.S. hegemony. The potential of this continent, which is similar to the U.S. in terms of economic prowess and natural resources... yet is vastly different in terms of its global aims means that America's interests could be in danger.

The European Union has almost 2 million troops... - and is home to some of the richest countries in the world, who may just be planning to create the United States of Europe.

The European Union's origins go back to just after World War Two... - part of an effort to integrate Europe and prevent the growth of extreme nationalism, which had devastated the continent in the 1940s.

The main aim of this international organization was to achieve closer political, economic and social ties between European countries... in order to bring lasting peace within the region, military security and economic growth.

There are now 28 member states in the European Union, including 4-out-of-7 countries that represent moe than 64% of the net global wealth: These are Germany, the United Kingdom, France and Italy; whose advanced economies contribute to the EUs growing GDP of $18.5 trillion, which is far above the United States GDP of 16.8 trillion.

This collective prosperity has fueled economic growth across the continent and helps it achieve the Union's four main aims: They are: 1) To establish European citizenship as a means to protect fundamental human rights; 2) to ensure freedom, security and justice; 3) to promote economic and social progress; and 4) to assert Europe's role in the world.

These aims have helped Europe to maintain lasting growth and welfare in the modern world.

But in its 60-odd years of existence, relations and policies within the organization have become increasingly complex. According to political journalist **Andrew Lilico**,[1] events in recent decades to achieve these goals, like the formation of the Eurozone, have made it clear that the EU's 's explicit ambition is - above all - political union. If it achieves this, then there would be a Western confederation similar in size to the U.S., which would have the largest economy in the world. In 2014 the Vice-president of the EU's European Commission, **Viviane Reding**,[2] explicitly called for a United States of Europe. She asserted that all 18 Eurozone countries - that's every country that has adopted the Euro currency - should form a full fiscal and political union to reach this goal. And with so many countries within the European Union sharing common policies, Reding's suggestion of a 'USE' is not at all implausible.

In 2015 French President **François Hollande** [3] called for the creation of a Eurozone government, with a specific budget, and a parliament to ensure full democratic control for all member states. Allied forces in Europe are poised to unleash their collective strength against growing security threats, like Russia and ISIS.

The EU has already demonstrated its power by enforcing economic sanctions on Russia for the country's invasion of Ukraine. And the continent is also home to some of the most formidable forces, including Britain's Special Air Service, France's extensive military deployments, and Italy's vast helicopter fleet. In 2012 the EU spent $281 million on military defense, including joint projects like the ***Eurofighter typhoon***, which is a multipurpose jet fighter with a maximum speed of 2500 kmph. The union also commands more than 1.6 million active personnel, and runs a joint armament procurement operation, which includes more than 500 active nuclear warheads.

American author Thomas Roy Reid is especially fearful of America's emerging rival. Aside from its military strength, Europe's population of 743 million, its trading power, diplomatic influence, and the strength of its currency are all greater than that of the United States. The EU doesn't flaunt its strength, or operate on brute, patriotic models like the U.S., but instead operates calmly through traditional political structures. It's this skilful diplomatic approach that political writer Mark Leonard believes will enable Europe to take over the world, without becoming a target. And with every country that joins the EU, the organization becomes stronger. However, the most pressing obstacle standing in the way of European expansion is the union's instability caused by the **2008 financial crisis**. This plunged the Eurozone into its own economic catastrophe. Several European member states including Ireland, Cyprus, and Greece were unable to repay the debt caused by the crash - and the Eurozone is still recovering from this disaster. Also, in 2016, the British Prime Minister **David Cameron** [4] announced a referendum on whether the UK should stay in the EU, so the organization could be set to lose one of its strongest members. Despite its overall unity, political, and military strength, the mosaic of different cultures and nationalities that constitute the European Union might just mean that the organization is too diverse and fragmented to realize the ultimate dream of a United States of Europe. But while the organization may never be seen as overtly dangerous to the rest of the world, its power as a unified force against extremism and illegal military intervention means that Europe's rule in the West should continue for years to come.

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[1] **Dr. Andrew Lilico** is Executive Director and Principal of **Europe Economics**. He is a Fellow of the **Institute of Economic Affairs** and Chairman of the **IEA/Sunday Times Monetary Policy Committee**. As Chief Economist of Policy Exchange from 2009-10 he produced what the BBC has described as the "essential theory" behind the Coalition's initial deficit reduction strategy. At Europe Economics he has worked extensively on major finance and regulatory questions, for clients such as the **European Commission**, UK government departments and regulators, industry associations and large firms.

[2] **Viviane Reding** is a key figure in Europe, completing 3 terms as a **European Commissioner**. In 1999, having served 10 years in the **Luxembourg Parliament** and 10 years in the **European Parliament**, she became the **European Commissioner for Education and Culture** and pushed through the **Erasmus World Programme**. In 2004, she became the Commissioner for **Information Society and Media**, winning a major battle against telecom companies by capping mobile roaming charges by 70%. In 2010, she became first **Vice-President of the European Commission** responsible for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship. She put in place a truly EU justice policy, launching a series of ground-breaking proposals in the field of civil, commercial, consumer and criminal law, thus creating the basis for a European area of justice, including major proposals in the field of consumer rights, women on boards, a common European sales law and the reform of the EU data protection rules. MEP from 1989-1999 and since 2014.

[3] **François Hollande** is a French politician who has been **President of the French Republic** since being elected to the position in 2012. Hollande was previously the First Secretary of the **French Socialist Party** from 1997 to 2008, the **mayor of Tulle** from 2001 to 2008, and the **President of the Corrèze General Council** from 2008 to 2012. Hollande also served in the **National Assembly of France** twice for the department of Corrèze's 1st Constituency from 1988 to 1993, and again from 1997 to 2012.

[4] **David Cameron** is a British politician who was the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom from May 2010 to July 2016.